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Freedom Crusade Gains Stature

Radio Free Europe, harassed and belabored by the Soviet Union since inception of its crusade to carry the word of hope for ultimate liberation to the enslaved peoples of Eastern Europe, has survived and thrived on adversity.

It has never backed off from any challenge by the Communists and the dedicated effort in behalf of the oppressed has risen in tempo. The recent domestic attack by a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist and radio commentator was vigorous but was wisely accepted by Crusade for Freedom, parent of Radio Free Europe, as a diversionary tactic. There followed the decision not to engage in a running debate with the commentator and writer. The Crusade for Freedom has one enemy—Communism—and all of its energy is converged on this single source.

Nonetheless, Crusade for Freedom has investigated and analyzed all of the charges contained in 23 newspaper articles and a comparable number of broadcasts. Now it calmly and efficiently reports to the hundreds of thousands of Americans who voluntarily support the anti-Communism program.

It was charged that Radio Free Europe was not reaching people in satellite countries because their sets were not equipped to receive short-wave broadcasts. Crusade for Freedom now assures its friends and supporters that, of 8,409,000 radio sets in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Bulgaria, the following percentages show those with short-wave bands: Poland 82%, Hungary 90%, Czechoslovakia 49%, Rumania 76% and Bulgaria 35%.

"Radio Free Europe is playing the propaganda line that the way to freedom is to adopt Tito Communism"

was a criticism that Crusade for Freedom says got its basis from a document not issued nor countenanced by the organization. National Communism and Socialism are not endorsed by the Crusade.

Inconsistencies, irregularities and extravagance were said to compound Radio Free Europe's alleged ineptness in warring on Communism. Ability and character of some key personnel were placed under a cloud. Crusade for Freedom was said to have refused an accounting of its funds. All of these have been gone into without substantiation. Crusade for Freedom does not make a public financial statement because it does not want the Communists to have the information, but the books are closely audited and its board of directors — made up of 60 outstanding Americans — knows where every dollar goes and notes with satisfaction there is no dereliction in the public trust.

Officials of the American Legion, strong supporters of the Crusade, made a minute study of the documents compiled by the columnist-commentator and reported there was no substance to his charges. Most of the 76 social, fraternal, religious, veteran and labor organizations supporting the Crusade have replied to the critic by reaffirming their complete faith in its conduct and accomplishments.

A spokesman for the Crusade observed that "he has to have issues with which to keep some sort of hold on his audience . . . he is not fair and would rather have a windmill to joust with than no opponent at all." It has ever been thus with capricious individuals, always will be, and the conclusion is that the Crusade for Freedom stands higher in the estimation of the people as the result of its experience.